

# 63RD MILITARY POLICE CORPS ANNIVERSARY

*By Captain Heather Stone*

*The Military Police Regiment's 63rd Anniversary Week events kicked off the second week of September at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, bringing together soldiers and leaders from across the Corps and around the world. As Colonel (P) Rodney L. Johnson, chief of the Military Police Corps Regiment and commandant of the US Army Military Police School (USAMPS), welcomed conference guests and visitors with this year's theme—Growing to Meet Our Global Mission—the mood was both celebratory and serious.*

Attendees greeted each other enthusiastically and prepared for the coming week's events, including the Leaders Conference, Warfighter Team Challenge, picnic, Hall of Fame induction, Regimental Memorial Tribute, Regimental Review, Regimental Run, golf tournament, and Anniversary Ball. Military police leaders gathered to discuss key issues affecting the Regiment: lessons learned; real-world operations; the impact of doctrine; tactics, techniques, and procedures; and force structure.

An impressive panel of speakers and key leaders highlighted the conference. Major General Robert Van Antwerp, commanding general of the Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood, welcomed the distinguished guests and visitors to the installation. Keynote speaker General Kevin P. Byrnes, commander of the US Army Training and Doctrine Command, opened the conference with a speech about Warrior Ethos and the role of the soldier in today's Army.

Other speakers included Major General Donald Ryder, Provost Marshal General of the Army and commander of the US Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID), who spoke on the current state of CID at the opening day of the conference, and General



**Colonel (P) Rodney L. Johnson addresses the Corps and guests at the Regimental Review.**

Barry McCaffrey (Retired), who spoke at the conference dinner. Also in attendance were General Gordon Sullivan (Retired), former Army Chief of Staff; Major General Robert Heine, commander of the 416th Engineer Brigade; Major General Paul M. Timmerberg (Retired), Hall of Fame member; Brigadier General Robert Taylor, commander of the 46th Military Police Command; Brigadier General Dion Lawrence,



**Major General Donald Ryder and General Kevin P. Byrnes address the Leaders Conference.**



**The Regimental Memorial Tribute was held in the Memorial Grove.**



## Warfighter Team Challenge

commander of the 260th Military Police Brigade; Brigadier General Kevin McBride, commander of the 43d Military Police Brigade; Brigadier General Morgasuti J. Ledwaba, chief of the Military Police Agency, South African National Defence Force; Brigadier General Thamer Sadoon Ali, chief of the Baghdad Patrol Police, Iraq; USAMPS Regimental Command Sergeant Major James Barrett; and Regimental Chief Warrant Officer Philip Tackett.

The five-day conference covered a wide array of topics, including a USAMPS overview; Transformation/Task Force Modularity, US Army Forces Command and Combined Forces Land Component Command updates, US Army Reserves and National Guard updates, Department of the Army General Counsel updates, and a presentation on the 89th and 16th Military Police Brigades. The Regiment's leaders also had the opportunity to attend breakout sessions and visit vendors' booths, furthering quality discussions on military police employment worldwide.

The second day of the conference ended with a dinner for the leaders at the Pershing Community Center. General McCaffrey, former US drug czar, recognized Brigadier General Thamer for his leadership and his Baghdad police force for their great courage. These comments prompted a standing ovation from the crowd. He added that he had no doubt that entering Iraq and Afghanistan was the right course of action for the United States. General McCaffrey described the connection between drugs, crime, and terrorism, explaining how drug money goes to fund numerous illegal operations across the world, to include terrorism. Admitting that the numbers were imprecise, he estimated that the country of Colombia alone produced approximately \$1 billion each year in illegal drug traffic.

While the conference itself focused on serious matters, a lighter, competitive spirit was impossible to miss. Military police soldiers competed against each other in the annual Warfighter Team Challenge from 16 to 19 September. The Warfighter Competition is the ultimate "Iron Soldier" competition, allowing elite military police teams to demonstrate their skills in various challenges to win the coveted Warfighter Trophy. At the awards ceremony, the winner of the competition is announced and gets to claim "bragging rights" for the following year.

This year's competition brought familiar faces back from years past, as well as many new faces. Korea's 8th Military Police Brigade team was





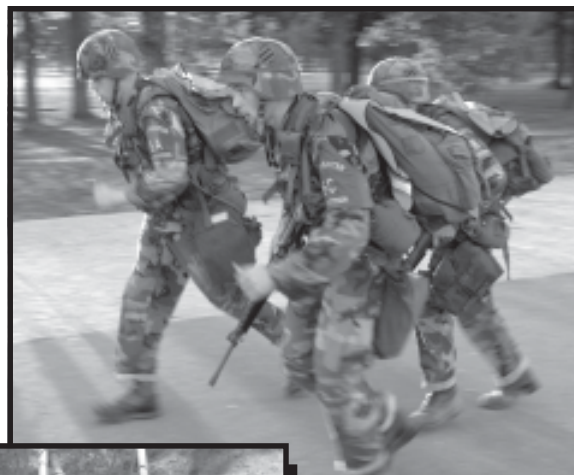
back, as were Germany's 615th and 212th Military Police Companies and units from Hawaii and the 504th Military Police Battalion at Fort Lewis, Washington; 38 units in all were represented. This year's winners were from the Fort Leonard Wood Law Enforcement Command. Coached by Sergeant First Class Sophia Evaro, team leader Sergeant Timothy Rex, Specialist Byron Coffee, and Specialist Chris Young stayed ahead of Korea's 728th Military Police Battalion to take home the trophy.

Also included in the week's events were the Regimental picnic at Colyer Park, the Hall of Fame Induction at the Military Police Museum, and a photo unveiling ceremony at the Regimental Room. Hall of Fame honorees included: Colonel Frank Cohn (Retired), former Chief of Staff of the Military District of Washington, who made significant contributions to the US counterdrug war and created an international working group on narcotics that still exists today; Command Sergeant Major Harold L. Burleson (Retired), former commandant of the Military Police Noncommissioned Officers Academy and the sixth Regimental command sergeant major; and Command Sergeant Major Donald E. Thomas (Retired), the first and only Military Police Corps Regiment command sergeant major selected to serve at the four-star level at the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, United States Forces Korea, and Eighth United States Army.

At the somber tribute in Memorial Grove, members of the Regiment honored their fallen comrades from the past year. After the speeches, there was a moment of silence in honor of slain military police brethren. Once complete, attendees moved to Gammon Field for the Regimental Review. The parade showed off the Regiment in all its glory as military police soldiers ended the day with a display of drill and ceremony for the reviewing party and spectators.

Beginning early on the morning of 24 September, leaders from the Regiment and special guests gathered for a day of fun at the Regimental Golf Tournament at the Pine Valley Golf Course. The weather was beautiful, and it gave players the opportunity to create some great stories to use in good-natured ribbing at the week's final event, the Regimental Ball, the following evening.

After welcoming the 836 guests at the ball, Colonel Johnson spoke of his admiration for military police soldiers and their widespread contributions to the War on Terrorism. He illustrated the Regiment's expansive footprint across the globe by detailing the number of





**Left: Regimental Command Sergeant Major James F. Barrett and Colonel (P) Rodney L. Johnson USAMPS Commandant place a wreath at the Memorial Ceremony. Center: Corps members, families, and guests enjoy the picnic. Right: The Dragoon makes his appearance at the Regimental Review.**

military police deployed or stationed overseas. Out of the 38,000 soldiers in the Regiment, more than 22,000 are serving overseas.

The ball was the grand finale of events for Anniversary Week, providing an opportunity to gather the Regiment's leaders in a large social setting. Guests ate well, danced, and enjoyed all the pomp and ceremony of a major formal event. They had come to Fort Leonard Wood to work hard and play hard, and they accomplished both objectives well.

*Photos for this article are by Visual Information Center photographers Michael Curtis, Bob Fitzsimmons, and Anthony Powers.*



**Vendor displays of law enforcement tools were set up at Nutter Field House.**



**Runners warm up for the Regimental Run.**